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RUSS 391.01: ST - Russia and the West

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RUSS 391, 9:30-10:50am, LA 302
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Russia and the West: From Peter the Great to Putin

The final years of the Cold War appeared to usher in an era of cooperation and joint ventures between Russia and the USA and major Western European powers. Many in the West seemed optimistic about Russia's ability to develop democratic and market-based institutions to facilitate Russia's eventual integration into the so-called family of Western European nation states. Few share such optimism today. Russia's relations with the United States and the West broadly conceived are among the most tense and confrontational in recent history. Many prominent Western commentators on Russia even go so far as to characterize the current period as a New Cold War. This course will attempt to place present-day relations between Russia and the West in a broader historical, cultural and political perspective.

REQUIRED TEXTS:

Available from your instructor: Martin Malia, *Russia Under Western Eyes*
The Marquis de Custine, *Empire of the Czar*
Chronicle of the Russian Tsars
The Three Whys of the Russian Revolution
Fyodor Dostoevsky, *The Gambler*
Alex. Solzhenitsyn, *A Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich*
Oliver Stone, *The Putin Interviews*

DVD MATERIALS (for general background): *Russia: Land of the Tsars*

GRADING:

25% Attendance and General Class Participation
10% Group Presentation (5-10 min presentation in a group of 3-4)
20% 2-3 page Response Paper on either:
Custine, *Empire of the Czar* OR Dostoevsky, *The Gambler*
20% 2-3 page Film Review: *Dr. Strangelove* in a Historical and Cultural Context
25% Final Exam

GRADING SCALE

A = 93-100	B- = 80-82	D+ = 68-69
A- = 90-92	C+ = 78-79	D = 64-67
B+ = 88-89	C = 77-73	F = 63 and below
B = 83-87	C- = 70-72	

PAPER GUIDELINES:

All written work for this class should be typed or done on a computer. Use a standard 12 point font and double-space. Proofread each assignment for typos, poor wording, mechanics, etc. Late work will be penalized one letter grade per class day. Plagiarism will not be tolerated in any form. Please ask if you have a question about what constitutes plagiarism, but on the whole, if you consult another work for ideas, copy or paraphrase from another source, etc., then you need to acknowledge the source (including the work you consulted, the publication information, and the page number/s) in your paper with a footnote.

GROUP PRESENTATIONS:

Each of you needs to sign up for a group presentation on one of the topics listed on the syllabus. I will pass around a sign-up sheet, and you should sign up for a slot that will work with your individual schedule. Some are presentations on a book that you will have to read on your own outside of class. You do not have to read the entire book, but at least enough so that you can do a solid group presentation on what the book is about. Pretend that your classmates do not know anything about the book at all and it will make the task easier. Your presentations will occur in groups of three students (or in a few cases, two or four students). You will need to meet at least once outside of class to go over your presentation and to prepare for who will do what once you get into the classroom. I recommend you use Powerpoint or prepare slides and/or visual aids, but you are not required to do so. Each in-class presentation should last a minimum five minutes and a maximum of fifteen minutes, and each group member should take an active part (but it is fine if one member speaks more than the others—just be sure each person in a group says something and that each person in the group participates in the preparation for the presentation). Respect your classmates (and yourself!) and relate to these presentations seriously and maturely. If people take these presentations seriously, the class will be much more beneficial and enlightening for all of us!

SYLLABUS

January	Thurs, 10	Course Overview and Distribution of Materials Group Discussion: What is "the West"? How do you define it? What about Europe? Do you consider Russia a part of "the West"?
	Tues, 15	Background: Russia prior to Peter the Great (part one)
	Thurs, 17	Background: Russia prior to Peter the Great (part two) Excerpts from <i>Russia: Land of the Tsars</i>
	Tues, 22	Peter the Great (overview in <i>Chronicle of the Russian Tsars</i>)
	Thurs, 24	Peter the Great and the West (image and legacy)
	Tues, 29	Catherine the Great (overview in <i>Chronicle of the Russian Tsars</i>)
	Thurs, 31	Malia, chapter 1 of <i>Russia Under Western Eyes</i> (p. 15-84) "Russia as Enlightened Despotism, 1700-1815" Presentation: Catherine, Russia & The French Revolution (1789)
February	Tues, 5	Alexander I (overview in <i>Chronicle of the Russian Tsars</i>) Presentation: The Decembrist Revolt
	Thurs, 7	Nicholas I (overview in <i>Chronicle of the Russian Tsars</i>)
	Tues, 12	Malia, chapter 2 of <i>Russia Under Western Eyes</i> (p. 85-159) "Russia as Oriental Despotism, 1815-1855" Discussion: Chaadaev: Philosophical Letters/Apology of a Madman Presentation: Westernizers in 19 th century Russia
	Thurs, 14	Petersburg Tales by Nikolai Gogol – read at least "The Nose" Presentation: Slavophiles in 19 th century Russia
	Tues, 19	Custine, <i>Empire of the Czar</i> (for today we will discuss in particular chapters V-XI, pages 47-172) What images of Russia does Custine present? What image/s of the West can you read into the way that he re-presents Russia in his book?
	Thurs, 21	Custine, <i>Empire of the Czar</i> (general discussion) Pick at least two quotes/short sections that you think are key to Custine's image of Russia in the book
	Tues, 26	Dostoevsky, <i>The Gambler</i> General discussion, but with particular focus on images of Europe versus images of Russia in the novel
	Thurs, 28	Dostoevsky, <i>The Gambler</i> (continued) Liberals, Radicals, Political Terrorism Presentation: the Assassination of Alexander II and Terror
March	Tues, 5	The Russian Revolution (background lecture) Response Paper One Due (2-3 pages) on either: 1) the image of Russia in Custine's <i>Empire of the Czar</i> ; or 2) images of Russia and/or Europe in Dostoevsky's <i>The Gambler</i>
	Thurs, 7	Pipes, <i>The Three "Whys" of the Russian Revolution</i> Discussion: The Russian Revolution in the eyes of Pipes
	Tues, 12	Malia, <i>Russia Under Western Eyes</i> (p. 357-407) "Tails, The Empire: 1945-1991" Post WW II USSR: Stalin, Khrushchev and the Cold War Presentation: Cuban Missile Crisis
	Thurs, 14	Discussion: Solzhenitsyn, <i>One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich</i> Presentation: Early Years of the Space Race <i>Dr. Strangelove</i> in context (begin the film today in class)
	Tues, 19	<i>Dr. Strangelove</i>

Thurs, 21	Response Paper Two Due Film Review (2-3 pages): <i>Dr Strangelove</i> in the Context of the Cold War Class Discussion: Dr Strangelove, Nuclear Weapons, the Cold War
Tues, 26	SPRING BREAK
Thurs, 28	SPRING BREAK
April	
Tues, 2	Gorbachev and the West Presentation: Western Rock Music and the USSR
Thurs, 4	Yeltsin and the West Presentation: "Shock Therapy" & Economic Reform
Tues, 9	Putin: Biography, First Term, 9/11 (lecture/video material)
Thurs, 11	The Putin Era Book Presentation: <i>Petrostate</i> (Goldman): Russia and Oil Book Presentation: <i>New Cold War</i> (Lucas)
Tues, 16	<i>The Putin Interviews</i> Book Presentation: <i>Kicking the Kremlin</i> (Bennetts): Polit. Protest
Thurs, 18	<i>The Putin Interviews</i> Book Presentation: <i>The Crimean Nexus</i> (Pleshakov): Crimea
Tues, 23	Putin Era Book Presentation: <i>Invention of Russia</i> (Ostrovsky): Media/News Book Presentation: <i>Plot to Scapegoat Russia</i> (Kovalik): Conspiracy Theory and Election Meddling
Thurs, 25	Course Wrap Up

